



Council for Lifelong Learning  
**State Employee Education Voucher  
Program**

**Fact  
Sheet**

September 2001

<p>1. What is the State Employee Education Voucher Program?</p>	<p>Current law permits a state employee to receive a voucher or grant for matriculation fees to attend work-related courses at public community colleges, public technical centers, or public universities.</p> <p>The Department of Management Services (DMS) is responsible for implementing the program from funds appropriated to the department. In the event that the funds appropriated for purposes of the program are insufficient, each state agency may supplement these funds with other agency funds to support the training and education needs of its employees.</p> <p>The 2001 Legislature provided \$500,000 in funding for the State Employee Education Voucher Program.</p> <p>The State Employee Education Voucher Program replaces the State Employee Fee Waiver Program which permitted full-time state employees to register, tuition-free on a space-available basis, for up to six hours per term at state universities.</p>
<p>2. Who is eligible to participate in the voucher program funded by the Legislature?</p>	<p>According to guidelines issued by the Department of Management Services, the voucher program funded by the Legislature will serve employees, either full-time or part-time, who occupy positions that have been identified to be eliminated due to reorganization, program phase out, grant elimination, downsizing, outsourcing, budget reduction, or other reduction in force. OPS and contract employees are not eligible.</p> <p>As noted previously, each state agency may use its own funds to provide equivalent vouchers if the agency determines there is a need and available resources. Training supported by agency funds is not limited to transitioning employees.</p>
<p>3. How is priority for state employee education vouchers determined?</p>	<p>Once all applications have been received, the Department of Management Services will work with agency heads to prioritize applications in a way that maximizes the available resources to focus on employees most in need of transitional training.</p>
<p>4. What fees are covered by the state employee education voucher?</p>	<p>Each voucher covers only the cost of matriculation fees as required by law. Other expenses associated with taking a course such as the Student Financial Aid Fee, the Capital Improvement Trust Fund Fee, Building Fee, Health Fee, Athletic Fee, Activity and Service Fee, lab fees and textbook</p>

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	<p>costs will be the responsibility of the employee unless otherwise waived by the institution or paid for by the employee's agency.</p>
<p>5. What are the requirements of voucher recipients?</p>	<p>Upon completion of the course work, the employee must submit a photo copy of the official grade received for the course to the employee's immediate supervisor to be maintained in the employee's personnel file. The supervisor must forward a copy of the grade to the Department of Management Services. Employees earning a grade below "C" (or "Unsatisfactory" in a pass/fail course) will be required to reimburse the value of the voucher should the cost of matriculation fees for the training or training series exceed \$1,000.</p> <p>The employee must sign an agreement stating that they will remain employed in state government, unless involuntarily separated, for an amount of time equal to the length of the course. If the total cost of matriculation fees for the training exceeds \$1,000, the employee will be required to remain employed for one calendar year.</p> <p>The employee must sign an agreement stating that he or she understands that reimbursement will be required if the employee does not satisfactorily complete the course work or if the employee voluntarily drops the course before completion. The reimbursement will be automatically deducted from the employee's salary warrant within the twelve months following completion of the course. This provision only applies to matriculation fees for training that exceed \$1,000 per term.</p>
<p>6. Why did the 2001 Legislature replace the State Employee Fee Waiver Program with the State Employee Education Voucher Program?</p>	<p>The 2001 Legislature replaced the State Employee Fee Waiver Program for a number of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to expand the options for state employees to take courses at community colleges and technical centers (in addition to state universities);</li> <li>• to give state employees the ability to register at the same time as other students (instead of only participating on a <i>space available basis after the drop/add period</i>);</li> <li>• to ensure that public funds were being used to improve employee skills <i>related to their employment</i>. (Many state employees would use fee waivers to take courses in weight training, ceramics, or other non-work-related courses);</li> <li>• to address the universities' concerns that they were not receiving adequate funding to cover the cost of the employee waiver program; and</li> <li>• to shift the responsibility for employee training back to the agencies. (Many agencies relied on the state employee</li> </ul>

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	fee waiver program to provide professional development & learning opportunities).
7. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	Section 110.1099, F.S. -- Education and training opportunities for state employees
8. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Management Services Division of Human Resource Management (850) 922-5449</p> <p><a href="http://www.myflorida.com">www.myflorida.com</a> ("Quick Topic" - Service First)</p> <p><a href="mailto:ServiceFirst@dms.state.fl.us">ServiceFirst@dms.state.fl.us</a></p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives Education Appropriations Committee (850) 488-6204</p> <p>The Florida House of Representatives Committee on Colleges &amp; Universities (850) 488-3711</p>